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EDITORIAL

The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching has recently issued a pamphlet in which is set forth a scheme for the reorganization of the curricula in institutions for the training of teachers. The immediate occasion for the compilation of the material was the making of a survey of normal schools in Missouri, which was expected to conclude with a body of recommendations. Ultimately, however, a larger sphere of influence was sought and the affair became one of national interest. Copies of the tentative scheme have been distributed with a request for full and definite criticism.

Because of the resources at the command of the Carnegie Foundation and the prestige which it has attained through those resources, all of those who are concerned with the training of teachers must take more than passing notice of this ambitious attempt to direct educational activity. Whether some other standardizing agency more immediately responsible to the patrons of the schools would or would not be preferable is, for the moment, of little consequence. The question at issue is whether the report as finally shaped shall represent the best current educational thought and practice of the time or shall perpetuate methods of procedure now obsolescent.

The report as it stands is far from satisfactory. Passing over minor weaknesses, such, for example, as the painful inadequacy of the provision for the arts as contrasted with abstract scientific formulations of human knowledge, we may call attention to what seems to us a gravely serious defect in the point of view reflected in the report as a whole. This consists in substituting general theory of education for specific knowledge of subject-matter and of economical methods of learning in the case of the various studies which make up the school program. To the educator of ripe scholarship in some field of learning and of wide experience in various aspects of school work, who is seeking to prepare himself for more wise and

effective leadership, the study of general principles of teaching and of administration is highly valuable. He has the basis for assimilating generalizations. The case of recent high-school graduates still in their "teens" is decidedly different. For them a very little theory taught through and by means of concrete activities in their classrooms and applied in actual practice under direction is all that will "function."

The issue is precisely that which has been fought out in the case of the art of composition. Only so much theory as the student can actually use is now taught. The science of rhetoric is reserved for the specialist who is to instruct others. Why should not perception of the analogy of the art of teaching with the art of composition save us from the inexcusable blunder of imposing upon the beginning classroom teacher that formal body of educational doctrine which has been evolved by the analysis of experience and, to a limited extent, by scientific experiment?

Doubtless revision of the Carnegie syllabus will greatly improve it. Those who are interested in the issues which it raises should do their part toward this desirable outcome by securing a copy of the document from the Foundation, making a careful study of it, and forwarding definite suggestions and criticism. The address is 576 Fifth Avenue, New York.

In view of Mr. Ward's vigorous thrusts at the "Scale Illusion" and the great confidence in the infallibility of college-entrance examiners which certain recent writers display, readers of the April *Journal* should consider the facts presented by Edward A. Lincoln in *School and Society* for April 7. Mr. Lincoln studied the records of 253 Harvard men as reported by their high schools, the college-entrance examiners, and their college instructors of the Freshmen and Sophomore years.

The results of the studies may be summed up in the writer's own words: "In the light of these findings our conclusion must necessarily be that the quality of work done in the high or preparatory school is better and more accurate than the grades received on entrance examinations as a means for determining the [student's] fitness for work in college." This statement is supported by two

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earlier investigations which Mr. Lincoln summarizes, namely, those of Professor Dearborn and of Professor Thorndike. The former established the fact that a very close correspondence exists between rank in high school and rank in college. The latter found very little correspondence between rank in college-entrance examinations and rank in college. Indeed, Professor Thorndike declares that a fairly large percentage of those shut out by the examinations would do better work in college than a third of those who are admitted. "Sooner or later," he declares, "someone will be barred out who, if admitted, would be the best man in college."

As for tests and scales, it is well to remember that only a small beginning has been made in the scientific determination of educational measurements. Nothing more is claimed as yet than that, in the case of a number of school studies, judgment of the extent and quality of achievement may be rendered appreciably more exact by the use of objective standards. This is true to a gratifying extent of such relatively definite activities as arithmetic, handwriting, and spelling; less so of composition. It is well to have very full and exact information on the subject of measurements in order to judge fairly their actual worth. To this end the *English Journal* will publish soon a list of references to supplement those given by Mr. Cross in March.